[For material on the nomadic kin-village among the Altaic-speaking peoples of the Asiatic steppe, see 10: Krader, AH1 Mongolia, category 116, pp. 568-574.]

000 it a unilateral kin group; the theorists of the clan cited here have equally consistently called it a unilineal kin group. Too much can easily be made of this distinction; however, it serves to reinforce the primary conceptions of the various proponents, and merely indicates that various leading thinkers have pursued their respective positions to remote points of etymology. The point remains, nevertheless, that a sib-member has little cause to reckon kinship lineally, i.e., backward or forward in time; his relationships are with those of his congeners who are his contemporaries, including two or three ascending generations, and the same number of descending generations; possibly, a fourth generation in either direction may be added if one takes in the references of one's father as well, and of one's son. The clan- and lineage-member, however, must reckon far beyond mortal memory and direct reference; he must have recourse to the oral tradition of his people which covers many centuries, for example in determining the eligibility of two people to marry.

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A common body of criteria for the clan has been derived from the theories and definitions of Morgan, Lowie, Kirchhoff, Radcliffe-Brown, Murdock, and Fortes.[1] The systems of consanguinity of the Asiatic steppe societies conform to these criteria of the clan, but have their own configurations unique to themselves; certain of the criteria are more important for the understanding of the

[1] [Ref. cat. 116, pp. 7-22 -- Analyst]

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kinship systems than others; and among these, the genealogy which serves to constitute the clan as such, and to delineate the unit of exogamy by counting off a segment of itself to make up the prohibited degrees of relationship for marriage, is a central criterion. The clan, with its genealogical orientation, its ranked collateral lineages, its territorial locus, and its generation count in exogamy, is contrasted with the sib on the steppes of Asia. The sib as distinct from the clan is not a widely recognized concept, but has been given adequate theoretical foundation by Lowie and Murdock, and above all, is pragmatically applicable to the analysis of the steppe societies.

The functions of the clan, on the other hand, are not limited exclusively to kinship and consanguinity. These societies have frequently formed vast empires, notably those of Chingis Khan and the Chingisides, Tamurlane, the Golden Horde, as well as monarchies of lesser historical éclat. The clan may be likened to the anvil upon which the political being was hammered out; the clan has served as a politico-military unit, furnishing companies or regiments of cavalry, collecting taxes through the persons of its noble leaders, and administering the laws and regulations of the monarch. Nevertheless, a principle is to be observed that runs through the length of recorded history, and through all the social unities of steppe society from the humblest to the mightiest: the lowliest

M. 182 614 Mongol could claim descent from a common ancestor with his ruler Chingis Khan; the lowliest Kazakh could make a similar claim in regard to his khan, as could a Kalmuk.
T.P. ●182 614 The steppe society has a structure which may be likened to a set of concentric circles, the widest circle being the whole of Mongol society, the next widest a principality, the next a clan, the next a lineage or set of lineages internally disposed in the same manner, the next the village, and the smallest the extended family.
M. 182 614 565 T.P. 182 614 565 The comparison to a set of concentric circles must be qualified, however, because not all Mongols or Kazakh-Kirgis are of equal birth; descent lines are collaterally ranked in terms of the birth-order of the respective founders, and at a certain point in the genealogical history of these lines, the highest ranking lineages have assumed noble status, while the others have remained in the commoner estate. The point in genealogical history when the society was split into two estates may be an event recorded in 'objective' history, such as the establishment of an empire, or a war, etc. In any case, it is an event outside the domain of kinship proper. The sibs do not form into a hierarchy of concentric structures; they are more like Kirchhoff's egalitarian clans.

M. 182 614 T.P. 182 614 The sib has had a set of political functions, even though such functions may be less spectacular than those of the clan and of the society with which the clan is

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associated. The sib has served as a unit of administration by outside powers such as the Chinese, who have appointed sib leaders as the rulers of administrative units into which the sibs have been organized. But the sib is not a territorial unit; one's neighbor is not necessarily a fellow sib-mate. Despite the differences in structure and in kinship and political function, the sib of the Asiatic steppe parallels the clan in many respects: kinship is basically agnatic in both; authority is 'transmitted in the line of the eldest sons; if the eldest son's line dies out, it passes to the senior surviving brother; and if there is none such, to the next ranking father's brother, and so forth.

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In regard to pastoral nomadic society of the steppe, the whole is consanguineally related in fact or fiction; however, there is a sharp cleavage between the clan and broader groupings than the clan on the one hand; and between the clan and its component units, such as the lineage, on the other. Only the clan and units larger than the clan, such as the principality, the khanate, etc., are divided into noble and commoner estates; the lineage and the extended family are homogeneously composed of either aristocrats or commoners, but not both. For this reason we may regard the clan not only as having a structure based on consanguinity, but also as a politico-military unit. The politico-military character of the division into estates is ultimately derived from a kinship

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principle; but this is a purely genetic consideration. In actual function, the estates are politically, militarily, and economically distinct divisions. Thus the entire society of the Asiatic steppe is anomalous, for its major units are quasi-political and quasi-consanguineal structures. Because of their consanguineal character, the clan and other major units therefore will be briefly sketched in their specific forms for each of the societies, Buryat, Kalmuk, and so forth. As consanguineal structures, their analysis will afford insight into the kinship relations within smaller units. Nevertheless they cannot be a primary consideration in the analysis of kinship systems because they go beyond this mode of human relationship into the domain of political structure, etc.

Village and Family

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The nomadic village on the Asiatic steppe is formed of a cluster of related families who pasture their herds together, camp together, nomadise together, combine for mutual protection and for religious rites. The village is a unit of local government having at its head an elder who, in company with other respected men of the community, guides its affairs and regulates its conduct, movements and relations with other units, larger, smaller, and co-equal. The elder, who is the head of the senior family of the village, together with his compeers, the heads of

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other leading families in the village, adjudicates disputes, maintains the social norms and mores by punishing evildoers, represents the village-kin-community before the reigning prince, oversees payment of tribute and taxes, and the supply of manpower for corvée and military service, attends to the mercantile endebtedness of the community; by the weight of their presence and inherent authority, as well as by specific acts and judgments, they unite the community and regulate its life.

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The village is that which the family becomes if it is large enough and wealthy enough. Where these two conditions are satisfied, one might find a great tent belonging to the head of the household, flanked by the tents of the wives, and separate tents for all sons who are of age, whether married or only betrothed; the tents of married sons might in turn be flanked by tents of their offspring; and on the outer perimeter of the encampment lie the tents of poorer and more distant agnatic kinsmen, servants' tents, storage tents, baking and cooking tents, etc. Such an ideal is not often realized; a village is usually comprised of a number of related extended families, each with a modest household of a few tents arranged around the tent of the patriarch, and several such clusters combining to form the larger village pattern. In the eastern steppe, i.e., among the Buryats and Khalkhas, the village is circular in form, as are the component household

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clusters; in the western steppe, i.e., among the Kalmuks and Kasakh-Kirgis, the village is deployed in the form of a broad arc open to the south, or in a straight line.

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The family is patriarchal: authority rests in the father, the senior male in the eldest generation of the household; marriage is patrilocal, wives come into the family of the husband. Polygyny occurs, in fact it is desired, but it is rare, to be undertaken only by those who can afford it, or who undertake it in the hope of assuring male issue and the continuation of the line. The steppe family is an extended family; that is, the family into which a son is born, and the family which he raises are one and the same, and there is usually an unbroken continuum of at least three generations: one generation past fertility, one child-bearing generation, and its offspring. Sometimes, if personality and wealth factors permit, this community may even include cousins who are sons of brothers, together with their children, making four generations and/or their progeny united in one family enclosure; but this, too, is rare. Nevertheless it is a valued situation, a desideratum, just as polygyny is.

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The wife in such a family structure has a double relationship, for her family of procreation is not that into which she was born, and she retains special ties to her natal family throughout her life. These ties are revealed by the special term which she uses in referring to

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her natal kin; this term is not the one used by her husband, and is one of the few instances of sex-specific kin terms; they are revealed in the relationship between her offspring and her brother, one of the very few aspects of cognatic relationship in an otherwise agnatic structure. The wife may seek the support of her own consanguines if she is ill-treated or divorced. The rule of patrilocal residence produces an oscillation in the adherence of the wife which need not exhibit itself ordinarily, but which comes forward when normal relationships threaten to break down.

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The extended family mirrors the corporate structure of the lineage: in theory it never dies, because it survives the life-span of any individual member; it has a clearly defined locus of authority, and in this respect is a purer type of corporate structure than is the steppe lineage; it has automatic rules of membership through birth, and rules of admission to membership through adoption such that the adopted son has the same social status as a natal son.

The extended family, like the patrilineage, is founded upon the principle of unilineal descent and agnatic relationship, i.e., it is composed of direct male descendants of a given man, close collateral kin, their wives and offspring. The conjugal families of which it is formed, on the other hand, are bilateral in structure,[29] for they are

[29] Lowie, Primitive Society, 111.

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the reproductive units of society. This formulation is by no means an attempt to explain the facts of life by finding learned words for the obvious; a social fact is more than merely a biological fact. The conjugal family is not a unit of social structure in the steppe society; that is, no verbal formulation or conceptualization corresponds to what we understand by the conjugal family. The unit which herds, pastures, camps, moves, is the extended family; it may be identical with the conjugal family through losses. Again, kinship terms conform to this scheme: the father in old age bears the term for father's father; the mother in old age bears the term for father's mother: the conjugal family is conceived as an indissoluble part of the extended family. The distinction between biological fact and social interpretation is fundamental in such ideas as the distinction between actual and socially recognized paternity. In many societies, the husband of the mother is by law the father of the child, a doctrine embodied in the Code Napoleon, for example. It is in this sense that we must understand Portes when he asserts that filiation is universally bilateral even in societies where descent is unilineal.[30] The extended family recognizes only a moiety (as Morgan would put it) of the relationships in the conjugal family.

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[30] Portes, Structure of Unilineal Descent Groups, 33-34.

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Bilaterality is a symmetrical conception, unilineality an asymmetrical one; and the symmetry inherent in the filiation pattern lies at the core of the cousin question. The basic cousin terminology, that from which all systems of cousin terms may be typologically, if not chronologically, derived on the Asiatic steppe is the reciprocal parallel cousin terminology; there is a common term for children of brothers, and a common term for children of sisters. The fundamental theme upon which all the variations are composed is the reciprocal term between maternal parallel cousins, and the reciprocal term between paternal parallel cousins. From these two reciprocal relationship terms may be derived the Buryat distinction between maternal and paternal cousin, simply by extending the term for paternal parallel cousin to include paternal cross cousin, and by performing a similar operation in the maternal cousin terms. Again, by holding the parallel cousin terminology constant, and so arranging the cross cousin terms that each is distinct from the other and from the parallel cousin terms as well, we derive the cousin systems of the Kalmuks and the Kazakh-Kirgis. The basic system, that found in Ordos and in Classical Mongol, is chronologically older than any of its typological derivatives; and we thus achieve an insight into the culture history of Inner and Central Asia. Bilateral filiation is a basic conception relative to the avunculate as well, and to all those relationships to the maternal kin sketched in above.

M. 182 596 T.P. 182 596 maternal kin sketched in above. Another contrast between the conjugal family and the extended family is that the former is essentially unstable, it may be broken up by divorce or migration, whereas the extended family is a permanent body, having, as we have seen, the properties of a corporate social structure.

M. 182 596 769 T.P. 182 596 769 The extended family of the Asiatic steppe is a diachronically oriented family. Such a family does not live for the present; it has received its birth, its being, its titles, honors, wealth, in short, its social position and status and property rights, from the past, from the ancestors, and holds them in trust for the future generations who will in turn honor the present locum tenens as an ancestor. The ancestors are honored and worshipped, not as geniters, those who have given birth to one, but as forebears, those who have kept the line of descent alive and maintained it across the generations, across time, diachronically. Thus the family corporeal and incorporeal property is not at all to be regarded as private property, nor even as the common, collective property of the congeners of the family. The entire patrimony is a trust to be held for the future, just as the family and lineage ancestors maintained the being of the line and its patrimony in trust for those yet to come. The practice of the levirate; the practice whereby children of an un-remarried widow belong to the family of the deceased husband regardless of who the actual sire is; the practice of adoption, of polygyny, all serve to maintain the line.

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of adoption, of polygyny, all serve to maintain the line. Let us leave the question of design, of telos, aside. With this type of diachronic orientation[1] is correlated--again the question of cause and effect aside--many intricacies of the kinship terminology. For instance, the son's son is called by the same term as the brother's son: the collateral line is downgraded a generation in this equation. Implied is a reservoir of kin upon whom one may draw to help perpetuate one's line. For brother's son adoption is the most common kind of adoption, and a ready-to-hand relationship exists for continuation of the line should there be no son, or should the son die without male issue.

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000 To the diachronically oriented family is contrasted the synchronically oriented family, found in the patronymic-sib societies. In families of the synchronically oriented type--and in the sibs in which they are found--ancestors are venerated and a few outstanding ones worshipped individually, but for the most part they are not singled out; they are worshipped en masse. In the matter of inheritance, there is no notion of a patrimony being held in trust for the future. While property is not dissipated necessarily, interest and concern in its retention may be imputed to an acquisitive ethos, rather than to the conception of a corporate unit as a trust. The synchronic orientation of the family of this kind fits excellently with the structure of the patronymic-sib, which is a flat

[1] [cf. cat. 116, p. 32 -- Analyst]

000 unit, without temporal depth, without deep oral tradition, as contrasted with the diachronically oriented social structure of the steppe pastoralists. Different too are the rules of marriage and of inheritance; above all, the genealogical charter, the expression in patrilineal terms of the oral tradition of the society, is missing in the named-sib and the synchronically oriented family.

M. T.P. 614 182 By way of summary, the society of the Asiatic steppe is a system of unilineal descent groups, membership in which is established either by real or fictive attribution of consanguinity, i.e., descent from a common ancestor. Consanguineal kinship in these groups is reckoned exclusively in the male line, and it is reckoned in the form of detailed genealogies, which may be demonstrable but are typically mythical. These units are the clans, composed of lineages. The lineage may be analyzed in terms of three structural principles, that of patrilineal descent, that of differential inheritance, and the dual process of lineage fission and fusion. In consequence of the patrilineal descent pattern, consanguinity is attributed only to agnatic kin; in consequence of the principle of differential inheritance, the component lineages are collaterally ranked within the clan; kinship is fictively attributed to those who join a lineage through the fusion of a remnant lineage to another one.

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Exogamy is practiced within a specified number of

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degrees of kinship in the ascending male line, a number equal to the generation count in the minimal lineage; the marriage is patrilocal in residence. The family is patriarchal in authority and the family into which a man is born and the family he raises are one and the same, hence it is an extended family; it acts as a trust, diachronic in orientation. The totality of the kinship relations, inheritance and religious practices, function to perpetuate the line, which is simultaneously that of the lineage and of the family, supporting each other mutually, and being supported in turn by the system of corporate structural principles embodied in them.

Patrilineal Descent and Agnatic Relationship

M. 182 611 T.P. 182 611

In the following pages, a broad geographic area will be covered, and a certain amount of time-depth as well, in tracing the kinship systems of the Mongol and Turkic societies. Nevertheless, a unifying structural feature may be discerned among them all: each of these societies is internally held together by the principle of patrilineal descent; descent in the paternal line is the social cement, and with one or two minor exceptions, there is no phase of the culture, no social relationship which is not founded on it. The economic system, the religious rites and ceremonies, the legal practices, the military and political organizations including the empires, are all based upon the system of agnatic relationships. The

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corporate structures of these societies are exclusively patrilineal; and this patrilineal composition, the set of agnatic relationships, has cast the entire kinship system into a distinctive pattern. The thesis of the following pages will be that the kinship systems of the various societies of the Asiatic steppes, the Buryats, the Ordos, the Kalmuks, the Monguor, and the Kazakh-Kirgis, are a series of variations on that pattern, which is an abstraction, nowhere actualised in detail. To trace the working of the patrilineal principle throughout the entire culture, in religion, the economic system, the politico-military organisation, is far too broad an undertaking for the present study. However, evidence from these various spheres will be drawn upon to support and deepen the analysis of the kinship system. And thus some insight may be gained into the manner whereby the agnatic relationship constitutes the social nexus, and thereby imposes its characteristic features on every aspect of culture and society on the steppes. The patrilineal, agnatic kinship system of these peoples gives that society its form, and as form, imposes itself on the cultural content, influencing thought, ideology, values, Weltanschauung.

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again; but the second marriage was accompanied by no ceremony.[143] The clergy thus came to play an important role at the beginning of the marriage, for it was they who had to set the auspicious day by astrological calculations; they blessed the marriage during the wedding itself, and presided over its disruption.[144]

Kalmuk Society in the 20th Century

Ka. 178 614

From recent reports a clear indication of profound structural changes which Kalmuk society has undergone is manifest. Evidence that the Kalmuks have transformed their society from the former patri-clan system to another may be derived from the studies of Borisov[145] and Aberle.[146] The conception of the clan which most adequately conforms to the practical needs involved in the study of Turko-Mongol society is that advanced by Kirchhoff,[147] who starts with the basic definition of the clan as a unilineal descent group, i.e., tracing descent either in the male or the female line, but not both; and clan membership may be attributed to a person on the basis of bio-

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[143] Nebol'sin, op. cit., 113, VI, 105.

[144] de Hell, 259; Bergmann, II, 146; Nebol'sin, op. cit., 113, VI, 94, 105; Nefed'ev, 193.

[145] Borisov, 23.

[146] Aberle, ms.

[147] Kirchhoff, The Principles of Clanship, ms.

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logically demonstrable birth, or through the application of a socially recognised fiction. Kirchhoff further distinguishes between "equalitarian" clans and clans in which there are differently valued lines of descent; it is to the second type of clan that the Turko-Mongols belong. The mechanism for the establishment of these differentiations to the satisfaction of the various clan members has been described at length in the foregoing;[1] the arrangement of ranked collateral lineages based upon the birth order of the founders, in turn based on the principle of primogeniture; the mode of differential inheritance of the various corporeal and incorporeal aspects of the patrimony; these are the basic features of the mechanism for differentiation. Upon this mechanism is superimposed a structural device external to the clan, namely, the differentiation into noble and commoner estates which, however, realize in their turn the principle of differential descent and inheritance, this time rendered fixed and impermeable. Nevertheless, throughout the structure of Turko-Mongol society generally, and Kalmuk society specifically, the practice of tracing descent through genealogical reckoning back to a common ancestor, is the basis of affirming all kinship and social relations, the consanguineal as well as the affinal. By reckoning genealogy and degree of kinship relationship, eligibility to marry is determined, obligation for economic, legal,

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[1] [Ref. cit. 116, AHI Mongolia, pp. 228-287 -- Analyst]

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military support, pasture rights, camping rights, and so forth. The genealogical principle, and the oral tradition upon which it is founded, is the basis for all social relations in the Turko-Mongol clan.

The concept of the clan as a group based upon the exact reckoning of descent in the form of genealogies (leaving aside the question of "truth" or accuracy of the genealogy) is contrasted with that of the named sib. The distinction upon which this contrast is based derives from a formulation proposed by Lowie: the sib, as he analyzes it, is a unilateral kinship group, i.e., tracing descent from either parent, but not both. The specific principle he brings to bear is the inheritance of a name, e.g., Smith, from either the father in a patri-sib, or the mother in a matri-sib, and this is all that is necessary for admission to membership in the given sib system.[148] Both the genealogical clan and the named sib are exogamic units, either in their totality, or in some operative sub-division of theirs which is based on the same respective principle, e.g., an exogamic lineage in the case of the clan as here defined.

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The Kalmuk social structure as presented in independently corroborative reports for the 20th century departed from the clan principle and conformed to that of the sib.

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[148] Lowie, Primitive Society, 111-112. Cf. also Lowie, Family and Sib, 28-40.